

In October 1998, Chief Fong was hired as a full-time military technician with the 174th Communications Flight. In his lengthy career within the organization, he held positions as a network administrator, network infrastructure technician, network control center supervisor, operations superintendent, and the finally as the Chief Enlisted Manager. As Chief Enlisted Manager, he was responsible for the training, readiness, and morale of all assigned enlisted personnel in support of combat and domestic operations. Chief Fong's other successful accomplishments include implementation of the following systems: Electronic Management Tracking System; Defense Biometric Identification System, and the Electronic Technical Order Distribution System, many of these accomplishments were firsts for the 174th Fighter Wing, the Air National Guard, and the United States Air Force. Chief Fong's other successes included installs and significant upgrades to the following base communications infrastructure and systems: Gigabit-Ethernet, Base Wireless Access, Base Area Network Modernization, NetApp Mass Storage, Network Control Center—Virtualization, Base Mass Notification System, and the Common Access Card, all told, totaling in the millions of dollars.

In March of 2000, Chief Fong deployed to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. Following the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks on New York City, Chief Fong played an integral part providing back-end communications support during Operation NOBLE EAGLE, when the 174th Fighter Wing was tasked to fly Combat Air Patrol missions over New York City. In November of 2006, he deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. At the height of the COVID pandemic, Chief Fong served as a Liaison Officer between the Air Force and Army for four and a half months. He provided logistical support to the New York State Military Joint Task Force, which was the command-and-control hub for all Central New York.

Throughout his career with the 174th Attack Wing, one of Chief Fong's crowning achievements and proudest moments has been serving as a Ceremonial Guardsman with 174th Attack Wing's Base Honor Guard. During his time with the Base Honor Guard, he performed well over seven hundred active-duty, retiree, and veteran funerals, as well as participating in parades and other details supporting the base and community. This often involved working holidays, weekends, and traveling throughout 23 New York State counties, covering over 23,324 square miles.

For his 31 years of service Chief Fong has earned numerous decorations which include: the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters; the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters; the Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster; and the Air Force Good Conduct Medal. His military unit awards include: the Air Force Meritorious Unit Award with two oak leaf clusters, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with combat "V" device and five oak leaf clusters. His military campaign and service awards include: the National Defense Service Medal; the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with 7 oak leaf clusters; the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Iraq Campaign Medal with one bronze campaign star; Global

War on Terrorism Service Medal; Armed Forces Service Medal; Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with gold border; the Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with five oak leaf clusters; the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with silver hour glass and bronze mobilization "M" device; the Professional Military Education Ribbon with two oak leaf clusters; the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon; and the Air Force Training Ribbon.

Chief Fong is married to Cynthia Kellar; has two children, Andrew and Jessica; and three grandchildren, Noah, Brooklyn, and Grayson. He is an avid photographer, trained in martial arts, and has flown solo in a Cessna 152, 182 and a Piper warrior in pursuit of a private pilot's license. Chief Fong is proud of his service to his country and looking forward to retirement and his next adventure.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in recognizing Chief Master Sergeant Bruce A. Fong for his three decades of honorable service. I wish Chief Fong the best in his retirement.

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#### CHUCK GROSS

#### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Chuck Gross of the Adams County Education Consortium on his retirement.

For more than six years, Chuck has served the Adams County Education community in his role as Executive Director. Chuck has worked in many different roles with several organizations over the years. One of his earliest roles was as Sr. Vice President and General Manager of Kinzley-Hughes from 1988 to 1995. He then moved to Broadband and Associates from 1995 to 1996 and transitioned to the consulting world as a Principal at Worden Gross Consulting for eleven years where he provided public relations, community relations, marketing and communications to senior executives at some of America's most well-known brands, including the Ritz-Carlton and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Following Worden Gross, Chuck went to work for Sector Brands for seven years working as a senior branding and marketing communications consultant, working collaboratively with each client's executive leadership team to enhance its value and position the organization for leadership and growth.

His final role has been with the Adams County Education Consortium where he has been responsible for directing a county-wide partnership—including school districts, higher education institutions, local governments and businesses—that works to enhance academic skills development, career exploration, and relevant work-ready skills for all students in Adams County. My office has worked with Chuck on several different occasions over the years and I am inspired by his work ethic and contributions to Adams County Education community.

I wish Chuck all the best in retirement and send gratitude for his service to our community, the State of Colorado, and the United States of America.

HONORING CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ELLA MAE SMALL FOR A LIFETIME OF COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE

#### HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor City Council Member Ella Mae Small for a lifetime of service to her community and local government in Cabarrus County, North Carolina.

Upon graduation from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Councilwoman Small first worked as a schoolteacher in multiple districts throughout North Carolina and Georgia and served as a professor at North Carolina A&T University. After retiring from teaching, she assumed the high calling of public service when she completed her husband Allen Small's term on the Concord City Council after he passed while holding office. As the first African American female member of the Council, Councilwoman Small paved the way for greater diversity in local representation and provided astute and knowledgeable leadership on the Council for over 15 years.

Over the course of her career, Councilwoman Small has exhibited exceptional commitment and dedication to improving her community. As a schoolteacher, she served as one of the first kindergarten teachers in North Carolina. Her influence as a trailblazer helped cement this position as a permanent fixture of primary education. Praised highly by her peers, Councilwoman Small exerted similar influence on the Concord City Council to serve as a catalyst for positive change. For example, this past year she helped take charge of creating the Concord United Committee for the purpose of further addressing issues associated with race, equity, and diversity in the City. Her exemplary leadership provides a standard for all public servants. Although well-known for her role and initiatives as Councilwoman, she has also remained firmly committed to carrying out her responsibilities as a concerned citizen by holding many positions with national and local organizations such as the National Education Association and the Cabarrus Community Council among many others.

I would like to extend my most heartfelt appreciation to Councilwoman Small for her years of exemplary service as a teacher, community leader, and public servant. I speak for our entire community in wishing her and her family continued success and happiness as she moves into retirement.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in honoring Councilwoman Ella Mae Small for her extraordinary service.

CONGRATULATING JEFF "THE IRONMAN" DOWNER ON HIS RETIREMENT AS GROUNDSKEEPER AT PEKIN HIGH SCHOOL AFTER 36 YEARS

#### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jeff "The Ironman" Downer on

his retirement after 36 years as a Groundskeeper at Pekin Community High School.

Jeff started working at Pekin Community High School as a Groundskeeper in 1985 after graduating in 1977. His professionalism, attention to detail, and strong work ethic will make him difficult to replace. Jeff noticed when he first started work at the high school that the field was brown in the middle. It took two and a half years, but he was able to grow the field to be green and presentable for the students who use it. Jeff is respected because of his dedication to his profession and to the school, and is well-liked by everyone there. I commend Jeff for his hard work over the years to make Pekin Community High School a beautiful place where students are able to learn.

It is because of community leaders like Jeff Downer that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Jeff Downer on his retirement from Groundskeeping at Pekin Community High School.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF LEE COOK

##### HON. TOM O'HALLERAN

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the legacy of Lee Cook, who passed away recently at the age of 83.

After being drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War, Mr. Cook served our country with honor and distinction until he was honorably discharged.

Known for his sense of humor, humility, and devotion, Lee has left a lasting impact on his community.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, eight children, twenty-two grandchildren, thirty-five great-grandchildren, and three great-great-great paternal grandchildren.

On behalf of my wife and myself, I want to commend Lee Cook's service to our nation, and offer sincere condolences to his wife, Ella R. Cook, and children, Alta James, Tommy Nodestine, Nancy Brown, Christine Cook, Sylvia Sloan, Sandy Cook, Martina Cook Johnson, and Frankie Cook.

My thoughts are with all who knew and loved Lee as they mourn his passing.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed a vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 430; YEA on Roll Call No. 431; YEA on Roll Call No. 432; YEA on Roll Call No. 433; YEA on Roll Call No. 434; and YEA on Roll Call No. 435.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF MARVIN SIMON

##### HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to honor the life of Marvin Simon, a distinguished World War II veteran, fierce seniors' and veterans' advocate, and most importantly, my friend for nearly 15 years.

Marvin served in the U.S. Army Air Forces during the second World War. That service led to a lifetime of supporting the needs of our nation's veterans.

Marvin and his wife Pearl moved to Florida in 1985 and he became a strong advocate for Broward County's senior population. He was Vice Chair of the Area Agency on Aging's Advisory Council. As a member of the Pine Island Ridge Civic Association, Marvin was responsible for the county's emergency medical services having a base on the Pine Island Ridge condominium grounds.

Marvin was also a longtime member of the Broward County Veterans Coalition. He worked tirelessly to ensure the men and women who served our nation maintained their dignity and wellbeing.

Marvin served on my Academy Nominations Board from 2007 to 2014. In that role, he helped shape the future of the military by selecting students who will lead the armed forces in the years ahead.

Marvin and Pearl were married for 73 years before her death in 2020. They had two children, five grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren.

Although Marvin is no longer with us, his legacy lives on through the countless individuals whose lives he changed for the better.

Marvin Simon was one of a kind—a selfless, compassionate and a tireless advocate for others in Broward County. He was a patriot in the truest sense, will be profoundly missed but never forgotten.

#### CONGRATULATING DR. DUANE ESAREY ON HIS RETIREMENT

##### HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, December 9, 2021*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Duane Esarey, who is retiring from the Dickson Mounds Illinois State Museum in Lewistown after many years of tireless service.

Dr. Esarey has been committed to the disciplines of archaeology and anthropology throughout his life, especially in Central Illinois. He started his career in 1977, working in the field as an archaeologist in the Archaeological Research Labs at Western Illinois University. In 1982, Dr. Esarey earned a promotion to Director of the Archaeological Field School of the University. The following year, he relocated to Lewistown and accepted a position as Collections Manager for the Dickson Mounds Illinois State Museum. Dr. Esarey served as Collections Manager until 1994, when he became Assistant Curator of Anthropology for the Museum. He worked in this capacity until 2004 when he left to complete his Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and work as Assistant Director for the Illinois State Archaeological Survey in Champaign-Urbana. After 15 years, the Museum welcomed him back on March 10, 2019 as Director. Dr. Esarey's contributions have been significant and irreplaceable to the profile and growth of Dickson Mounds Illinois State Museum, and the fields of archaeology and anthropology in Central Illinois.

It is because of dedicated, innovative, and insightful leaders such as Dr. Esarey that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to, again, formally recognize Dr. Duane Esarey and thank him for his service to the collective Central Illinois community.